

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AT YUMA DEPOT.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN RELATION TO

The number and dimensions of Government buildings at Yuma Depot liable to damage from freshets in the Colorado River.

JUNE 19, 1874.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 28, 1874.

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit to the House of Representatives, for the information of the Committee on Military Affairs, as requested by the chairman of said committee in letter of the 21st instant, letter of the Quartermaster-General of the Army, dated the 25th instant, showing the number and dimensions of Government buildings at Yuma Depot liable to damage from freshets in the Colorado River.

WM. W. BELKNAP,
Secretary of War.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, D. C., May 25, 1874.

SIR: I have the honor to return the letter of Hon. John Coburn, M. C., chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, referring to the letter from the Secretary of War in relation to a project for the protection of the banks of the Colorado River at Yuma Depot, and calling for information as to the number and value of the Government buildings in danger of destruction, and as to the expediency of removing said buildings to a place of safety.

The buildings at Yuma Depot, located on the bank of the river, and subject to be undermined and washed away, are—

Quarters for the officer in charge, 45 by 32 feet; walls 3 feet thick, 14 feet high. Kitchen, detached, 30 by 16 feet; walls 3 feet thick, 12 feet high; roofs shingle, and in good condition.

Store-houses: One building, 121 by 103 feet; walls 14 feet high; divided into three rooms; shingle roofs; in good condition.

Corral, 246 by 216 feet.

An engine-house, containing a steam-engine and pump for supply of the depot with water through an elevated stone tank or cistern.

All these buildings are of sun-dried bricks, (*adobes*), and to remove them is impossible.

If the walls were demolished and rebuilt a great part of the material would be destroyed in the process.

Labor, in the intensely hot and dry climate of Yuma, which lies on the bank of the Colorado River, but in the midst of the great Colorado Desert, is very costly; therefore, to abandon these buildings and rebuild farther back from the river-bank would be very expensive. The country produces nothing, and food for the laborers and teams employed must be brought from San Francisco.

A description of the depot is to be found in "Outline Descriptions of United States Military Posts and Stations," published by the War Department (Quartermaster-General's Office) in 1872.

The post is a most important one, and I recommend that the appropriation to protect the banks of the river be made, as already recommended by the Secretary of War, (Ex. Doc. No. 154, 43d Congress, 1st session.)

These buildings have been erected at intervals during many years. They are in excellent condition, convenient, and suitable for their purposes.

I am not able to report their present value, but it is much greater than the amount asked to protect the site; and the cost of rebuilding them would, in all probability, much exceed the sum estimated for their preservation, besides interrupting work of depot.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

M. C. MEIGS,

Quartermaster-General, Bvt. Maj. Gen., U. S. A.

The Hon. SECRETARY OF WAR,

Washington, D. C.